Remarks:

The above amendments and these remarks are responsive to the Office action dated September 8, 2006.

Prior to entry of this Amendment, claims 1, 3, 4, and 7-25 remained pending in the present application. Claims 1, 3, 7, 8, 13-17, and 20-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) based on U.S. Patent No. 6,801,935 to Shen ("Shen"). Claims 4, 9-12, 18, and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Shen in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,859,832 to Gecht ("Gecht"). Applicants respectfully disagree, but have amended claims 1, 8 and 15 to make the claims more clear.

In view of the foregoing amendments, and the remarks below, applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims.

Prior Art Rejections

As noted above, claims 1, 3, 7, 8, 13-17, and 20-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) based on Shen, and claims 4, 9-12, 18 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Shen in view of Gecht.

Shen discloses a system and method of using an electronic mailbox to print private documents on a shared computer or printer. According to Shen, a user renders a print job, selects a PIN, and (optionally) selects a security code, all at a desktop computer (1). The print job is then sent, along with the PIN and (optional) security code, from the desktop computer to a selected electronic mailbox stored on a web server (14). See Fig. 5, and col. 4, line 50 to col. 5, line 51. A retrieving user may subsequently

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retrieve the print job from the electronic mailbox for printing on a shared printer by accessing the stored print job from a printer (30), and sending a PIN and security code (if required) to the electronic mailbox. The print job is printed only if the PIN and security code entered by the retrieving user is the same as the PIN and security code selected by the user that rendered the print job. See Fig. 8, and col. 5, line 56 to col. 7, line 41.
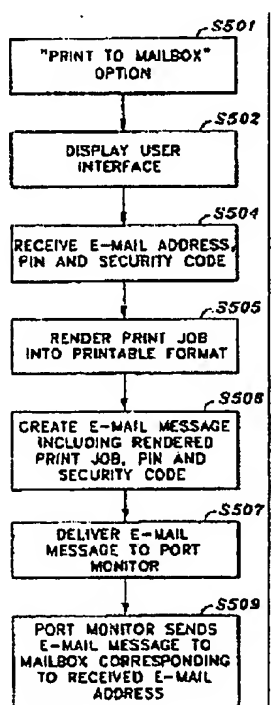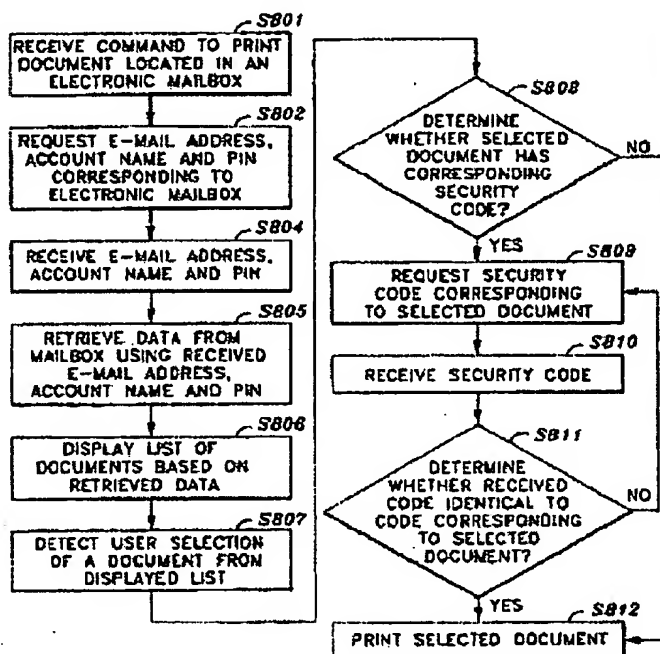

FIG. 5

FIG. 8

The Examiner has asserted that:

Shen discloses a method comprising sending an authorization code (PIN and/or security code) to a client computer (server 14) from a monitoring device (printer 30) remotely located relative to the client computer...subsequently sending a print job with the authorization code from the client computer to the remote monitoring device..., the remote monitoring device checking whether the authorization code is valid..., enabling printing of the print job upon determining that the authorization code is valid..., and disabling printing of the print job upon

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determining that the authorization code is invalid... *[See page 3, paragraph 1 of the Office action]*.

The Examiner thus has characterized web server (14) (where the electronic mailbox is located) as a "client computer" of the type set forth in applicants' claims. Applicants respectfully disagree with this characterization.

As shown in Fig. 1 below, applicants propose a client computer (110) that is inconsistent with server (14) of Shen. "Client 110 is a user operated device capable of *sending a print job request*." See page 4, lines 13-14 (emphasis added).
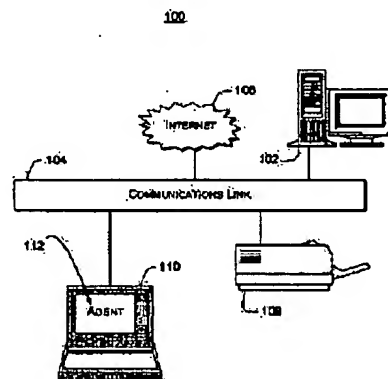

Fig. 1

In order for a user to print a document on printer (108) from the client computer (110), an authorization code is sent from a remote monitoring device (102) to an agent (112). The agent takes the form of software on the client computer configured to store an authorization code provided by the remote monitoring device. Accordingly, when a print job is rendered by client computer (110), the agent (112) assigns the authorization code to the print job and the print job, and associated authorization code are sent from

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the client computer to the monitoring device.   The monitoring device determines

whether the print job has been assigned a valid authorization code.

As is now clear in the pending claims, the client computer is the computer where

a print job is rendered. In contrast, server (14) of Shen is remote from the device where

the print job is rendered. According to Shen, server (14) is configured to receive and

store print jobs that were rendered at, and sent from, a different location (i.e., desktop

computer 1).

As amended, claim 1 recites:

> A method comprising:
> rendering a print job with a client computer;
> sending an authorization code to the client computer from a monitoring device remotely located relative to the client computer;
> subsequently sending the print job with the authorization code from the client computer to the remote monitoring device;
> the remote monitoring device checking whether the authorization code is valid;
> enabling printing of the print job by a printer remote from the remote monitoring device upon determining that the authorization code is valid; and
> disabling printing of the print job upon determining that the authorization code is invalid.

The amendment to claim 1 makes clear that a client computer is a computer where a

print job is rendered, not an intermediate server. Correspondingly, amended claim 1

makes clear that the remote monitoring device is not a printer where the print job

ultimately is produced.

Shen does not disclose or suggest each and every element of the method recited

in claim 1. Specifically, Shen does not disclose "sending an authorization code to [a]

client computer from a monitoring device," where the client computer is a computer

where a print job is rendered, as recited in amended claim 1. Rather, as described by

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the Examiner, Shen discloses sending an authorization code from printer (30) to server (14). The print job is rendered at desktop computer (1).

Assuming then that Shen's desktop computer (1) corresponds to the client computer recited in amended claim 1 (the client computer renders the print job), it will be appreciated that Shen does not disclose sending an authorization code to the client computer from a remote monitoring device. Furthermore, it will appreciated that the Examiner's characterization of Shen does not allow for a "printer remote from the remote monitoring device," as recited in amended claim 1. Accordingly, claim 1 is not anticipated by Shen and the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) should be withdrawn.

Claims 3 and 7 depend from claim 1, and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. The rejection of claims 3 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) based on Shen thus also should be withdrawn.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Shen in view of Gecht. Claim 4 depends from claim 1. Gecht adds nothing to Shen to overcome the distinctions noted herein with respect to Shen. The rejection of claim 4 based on Gecht in view of Shen thus should be withdrawn for at least the same reasons set forth with respect to claim 1.

As amended, claim 8 recites:

> In a public computer service center where multiple computers can be connected to a communications link associated with the service center, a method comprising:
> creating a request to log on to the communications link;
> rendering a print job with the client computer;
> sending an authorization code from a host located on the communications link to a client computer located on the communications link;
> embedding the authorization code in a header of the print job;

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        subsequently sending the print job with the embedded authorization code from the client computer to a printer; and

        checking whether the authorization code is valid, prior to enabling or disabling the print job from printing.

Similar to the amendment to claim 1, the amendment to claim 8 clarifies that the client computer is a computer where the print job is rendered. Claim 8 also recites that the authorization code is embedded in the header of the print job.

Shen does not disclose or suggest each and every element of the method recited in amended claim 8. Specifically, Shen does not disclose "sending an authorization code from a host located on the communications link to a client computer located on the communications link," where the client computer is a computer where: (i) a print job is rendered; and (ii) the authorization code is embedded in the header of the print job. Shen instead discloses sending an authorization code from a printer to an intermediate server (14) (at which a print job has been received and stored in an electronic mailbox) to determine whether the sent authorization code is the same as a user-selected authorization code already associated with the stored print job. Accordingly, claim 8 is not anticipated by Shen and the rejection of claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) should be withdrawn.

Claims 13 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) based on Shen. Claims 13 and 14 depend from claim 8. The rejection of claim 13 and 14 thus for at least the same reasons as claim 8, should be withdrawn.

Claims 9-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Shen and Gecht. Gecht adds nothing to Shen to overcome the deficiencies set forth with respect to claim

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8. Claims 9-12 depend from claim 8, and are therefore allowable for at least the same

reasons as claim 8.

As amended, claim 15 recites:

> A system comprising:
> a communications link;
> a monitoring device attached to the communications link;
> a computer attached to the communications link; and
> an agent installed on the computer, configured to provide an interface
> between the computer and the communications link, wherein the agent receives
> an authorization code from the monitoring device, and assigns the authorization
> code to a print job rendered with the computer,
> wherein the monitoring device is configured to receive the print job and
> verify whether the authorization code is valid.

The amendment to claim 15 thus clarifies that the authorization code is sent via an

agent from a monitoring device to a computer where a print job is rendered.

Shen does not disclose or suggest each and every element of the system recited

in amended claim 15. Specifically, Shen does not disclose an agent that: (i) is installed

on a computer, and (ii) "receives an authorization code from [a] monitoring device, and

assigns the authorization code to a print job rendered with the computer." The network

computer (1) disclosed in Shen cannot anticipate "the computer" recited in claim 15,

because the desktop computer (1) does not "receive an authorization code" from any

monitoring device. The server (14) disclosed in Shen also cannot anticipate "the

computer" recited in claim 15, because server (14) does not render the print job.

Accordingly, claim 15 is not anticipated by Shen and the rejection of claim 15 under 35

U.S.C. §102(e) should be withdrawn.

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Inasmuch as claims 16-25 depend from claim 15, such claims are patentable for

at least the same reasons as claim 15. The rejection of claims 16-17 and 20-25 under

35 U.S.C. §102(e) based on Shen, and the rejection of claims 18-19 under 35 U.S.C. §

103(a) based on Shen and Gecht thus also should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

Applicants believe that this application is now in condition for allowance, in view

of the above amendments and remarks. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request

that the Examiner issue a Notice of Allowability covering the pending claims. If the

Examiner has any questions, or if a telephone interview would in any way advance

prosecution of the application, please contact the undersigned attorney of record.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to Examiner J. Pokrzywa, Group Art Unit 2625, Assistant Commissioner for Patents, at facsimile number (571) 273-8300 on December 8, 2006.

Christie A. Doolittle

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